

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated June 18, 2003 (Paper No. 13). Claims 1 to 13 and 26 to 38 are in the application, with Claims 14 to 25 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 1 and 26 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that Claims 26 to 38 have been allowed and that Claims 2 to 5 and 9 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1, 6 to 8 and 11 to 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,185,029 (Ishihara); and Claim 10 was rejected under § 103(a) over Ishihara. Applicant has considered the Examiner's comments together with the applied reference and respectfully traverses the rejections.

Independent Claim 1 concerns a light scanning optical system in which an incidence optical system causes a beam emitted from a light source to be incident on a deflecting surface of a light deflector at a predetermined angle in a sub-scanning cross-section. An imaging optical system images the beam reflected and deflected by the light deflector on a surface to be scanned. A maximum value and a minimum value of a peak intensity in an effective scanning area of a spot imaged on the surface to be scanned by the imaging optical system are defined as E_{\max} and E_{\min} , respectively, and satisfy the following condition: $0.8 \leq E_{\min}/E_{\max}$.

The applied reference is not seen to disclose the foregoing features of the present invention. In particular, the applied reference is not seen to disclose at least the feature of satisfying the condition $0.8 \leq E_{\min}/E_{\max}$, where E_{\min} and E_{\max} represent a minimum value and a maximum value, respectively, of a peak intensity in an effective scanning area of a spot imaged on a scanned surface.

Ishihara concerns an optical scanner in which a light quantity distribution of deflected light flux is made substantially uniform over an effective scanning range. As described in column 6, lines 38 to 40, "substantially uniform" means that the light quantity distribution is within $\pm 5\%$ of the light quantity on the axis. By making the light quantity distribution substantially uniform, Ishihara indicates that the distribution of light intensity of the light flux is within the range of $\pm 5\%$ over the effective scanning range. See column 6, lines 41 to 44. The Office Action contended that since the distribution of light intensity in Ishihara is substantially uniform ($\pm 5\%$), the ratio of the minimum and maximum values of the peak intensity must be close to 1.0. Applicant respectfully disagrees with this interpretation of Ishihara.

The distribution of light intensity of the light flux in Ishihara is seen to refer to the quantity of light flux. Applicant submits that the quantity of light flux over the effective scanning range can be within the range of $\pm 5\%$ while the peak intensity falls within a range larger than $\pm 5\%$ since the quantity of light flux is obtained by integrating a distribution of intensity. Furthermore, since Ishihara is not seen to refer specifically to a peak intensity when discussing making the light quantity distribution substantially uniform, Ishihara is not seen to disclose that a peak intensity is within the range of $\pm 5\%$.

Therefore, Ishihara is not seen to disclose at least the feature of satisfying the condition $0.8 \leq E_{\min}/E_{\max}$, where E_{\min} and E_{\max} represent a minimum value and a maximum value, respectively, of a peak intensity in an effective scanning area of a spot imaged on a scanned surface.

Accordingly, independent Claim 1 is believed to be allowable over the applied reference. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102(e) rejection of Claim 1 is respectfully requested.

The other rejected claims in the application are dependent from Claim 1 and therefore are believed to be allowable over the applied reference for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters having been raised in the Office Action, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California, office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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